



# Pharr

## **PRESS RELEASE**

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# **Pharr Releases City Manager's Salary**

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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**Pharr, Texas** – After an extensive search to lead the administration and oversight of the daily operations of the City of Pharr, city officials announced the selection of Alex Meade as its city manager late last year. Meade brings a wealth of professional experience, leadership capacity, and a progressive vision that aligns with Pharr's goals and direction, according to Pharr Mayor Ambrosio Hernandez, MD.

Currently, the City of Pharr remains in a highly competitive position among cities in the Rio Grande Valley in terms of property tax growth, sales tax activity, and the ability to attract and retain talented employees. In recent months, a series of leadership transitions in neighboring communities, including the retirement and resignation of several city managers, has left city leaders actively searching to find qualified candidates to fill these vacancies. Pharr's own former city manager resigned to work for a neighboring community at a more competitive salary.

While city officials understand and respect the public's right to obtain public information, they also have to balance the best interest of the city and its potential for growth and development with the potential disadvantages of making certain information public, given the competitive nature between Valley cities. Recently, a freelance news reporter submitted a public information request to Pharr's city secretary asking for the new city manager's contract, which included his annual salary. In this case, the city believed it to be in its best interest to try to protect its investment in talent and the potential economic growth that Meade's experience would bring to Pharr. In an effort to keep that information private, the City of Pharr, relying on the Texas Supreme Court's ruling in *Boeing vs. Paxton*, sought an Attorney General Opinion allowing withholding of the new city manager's salary information.

However, in the interest of continuing its commitment to transparency, Mayor Hernandez decided this week to release all information related to Meade's employment and salary to the public. Set at \$250,000 base annually, plus \$7,200 annual car allowance, the new city manager's salary is comparable to what surrounding Valley cities of equal size are paying their respective city managers. Meade's contract also provides for standard employee benefits and a severance if he were to be terminated without cause. The City has also withdrawn its request for a ruling from the Texas Attorney General.

The City of Pharr is proud to have been able to recruit and retain Meade -- a

highly-qualified, well-educated, and accomplished administrator -- as its newest city manager. Meade's educational background includes a Bachelor's Degree in Economics from St. Edward's University, a Master's Degree in Business Administration, and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from UTB and UTPA, respectively.

Meade's professional accomplishments include attracting projects that created jobs and capital investments in excess of \$300 million for the Mission EDC. Collectively, Meade brings 15 years of economic development experience, most recently, while at the Mission EDC, Meade developed workforce development programs that have been recognized at the local, state, and federal levels. He implemented a small-business fund (Ruby Red Ventures) for citizens of Mission, and established the Code-the-Town initiative, which promotes computer science education in the city. In the fall of 2016, Meade opened Mission EDC's Center for Education and Economic Development, a 55,000-square-foot co-working facility aimed at creating an entrepreneurial and creative ecosystem in the City of Mission.

In addition to these achievements, Meade was recently appointed by Governor Greg Abbott to the Texas State Technical College Board of Regents and was previously appointed by Governor Abbott to the Texas Economic Development Corporation. He was also previously appointed by Governor Rick Perry to the Texas State Affordable Housing Corporation; the Cancer Prevention and Research Institute of Texas; the Texas State Board of Plumbing Examiners; and the Governor's Advisory Board of Economic Development Stakeholders.

City officials are confident in Meade's commitment to the City of Pharr and confident that his vast experience will contribute to the progressive vision for Pharr's future.

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